



◀ An alcohol ignition interlock is a breath-test device connected to a vehicle's ignition. The vehicle will not start unless the driver blows into the interlock and has a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) below a pre-set low limit, usually .02 BAC.

Increasing Alcohol Ignition Interlock Use

Successful Practices for States

Keep your state safe—increase alcohol ignition interlock use.

Ignition interlocks reduce repeat offenses for driving while intoxicated (DWI) by about 70% while they are installed. All states have implemented ignition interlock programs to manage interlock issues and monitor offenders who are required or eligible to install them. Despite these laws and programs, only about one-fifth of those arrested for DWI have interlocks installed.

How can states increase alcohol ignition interlock use?

To achieve and sustain high ignition interlock use, states may consider the following eight program keys that can be used to strengthen state Alcohol Ignition Interlock Programs. These program keys were identified through a collaborative evaluation* that looked at characteristics of existing state interlock programs associated with increases in interlock use. Implementing just one of these program keys is likely to increase interlock use. Implementing multiple program keys is associated with even higher increases in interlock use.

* Program keys were derived from an evaluation conducted in 2014 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), and the Governors Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and produced by the Preusser Research Group. The evaluation looked at key features of interlock programs and use of interlocks in 28 states from 2006–2011. Each state's program keys were rated and correlation analysis was used to determine which were related to higher interlock use. The full report, *Evaluation of State Ignition Interlock Programs: Interlock Use Analysis from 28 States*, contains additional data, analyses, discussion, and examples of strong program keys from various states. The report is available at <http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/812145-EvalStateIgnitionInterlockProg.pdf>.



**Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention**
National Center for Injury
Prevention and Control



U.S. Department of Transportation
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

Produced in
collaboration
with Governors
Highway Safety
Association

Eight Program Keys for Strong State Alcohol Ignition Interlock Programs

PROGRAM KEY	CHARACTERISTICS OF A STRONG PROGRAM KEY	EXAMPLE
Require or incentivize use	Requirement or strong incentive to install interlocks	A law covering all offenders with significant reduction of hard license suspension period if interlock is installed
Levy strong penalties	Strong, swift, and appropriate penalties	Extension of interlock time, home monitoring, jail time if refuse to install, fail breath test, or tamper or otherwise circumvent interlock
Monitor interlocks to ensure proper use	Careful monitoring to assure interlocks are installed and used as intended	Random checks by DMV, probation, or treatment centers to ensure offender has installed and is using an interlock
Implement uniformly across state	Uniform and consistent implementation, statewide	All agencies report data regularly in compatible format, using uniform definitions of violations in same time frame
Coordinate across agencies	Close coordination and communication across all agencies	Regular communication with representatives from all interlock program involved agencies
Educate stakeholders about the program	Regular training or education for all interlock agency staff and management	Regular trainings between interlock program managers, law enforcement, vendors, DMV, and court staff
Provide adequate resources	Adequate staff and funding resources	Designated interlock program manager and staff, financial assistance for offenders
Use data for action	Excellent data records (including level of offense, BAC level at time of arrest, number of prior arrests, installation/removal dates, violations)	Combined annual data on offenders available from all agencies to monitor offenders, report violators and evaluate program effectiveness



A. Program Design

Program Key #1: Require or incentivize use

Requirements are determined by state ignition interlock laws and describe which types of offenders (first-time, repeat, or high BAC*) are required to install interlocks. State laws may also define incentives for installing an interlock.

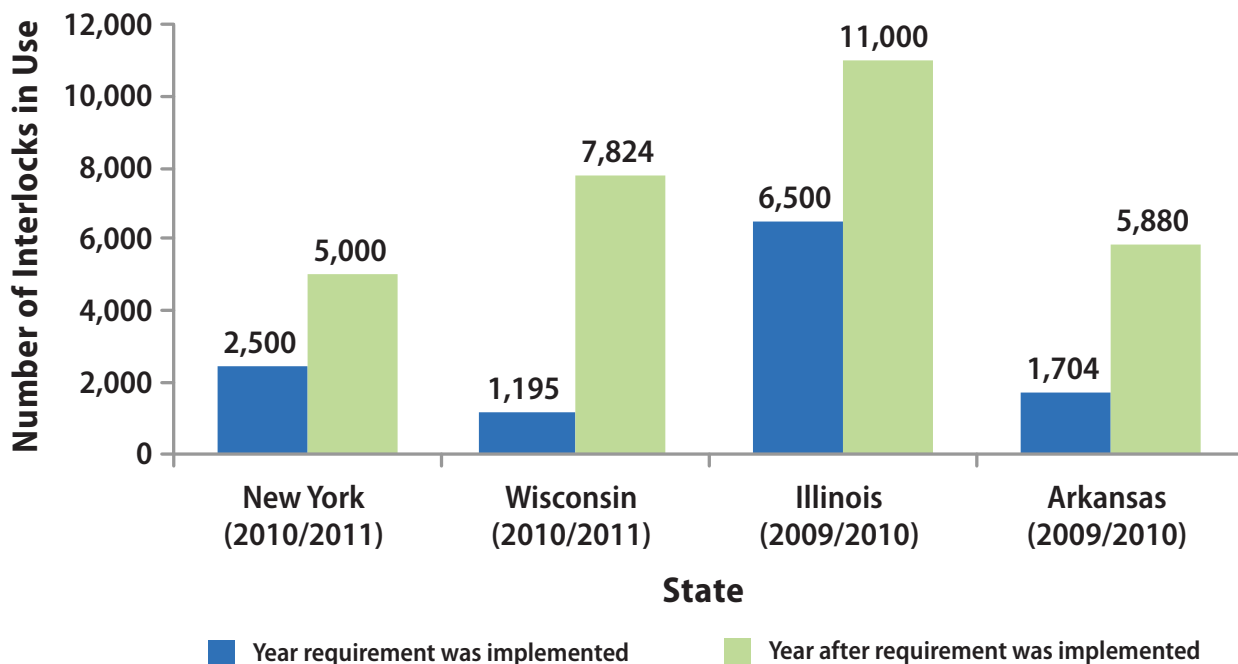
**Usually defined as BAC \geq 0.15 mg/dl which varies by state.*



Requirements are strongly associated with increased interlock use.

States in Action:

Interlocks in Use After Requirements Were Implemented



- **New York:** Required interlocks for first time offenders, interlock use increased 100% in the following year.
- **Wisconsin:** Required interlocks for repeat or high-BAC offenders, interlock use increased 555% in the following year.
- **Illinois:** Required interlocks to obtain hardship license, interlock use increased 69% in the following year.
- **Arkansas:** Required interlocks to reduce or eliminate license suspension period, interlock use increased 245% in the following year.

Program Key #2: Levy strong penalties

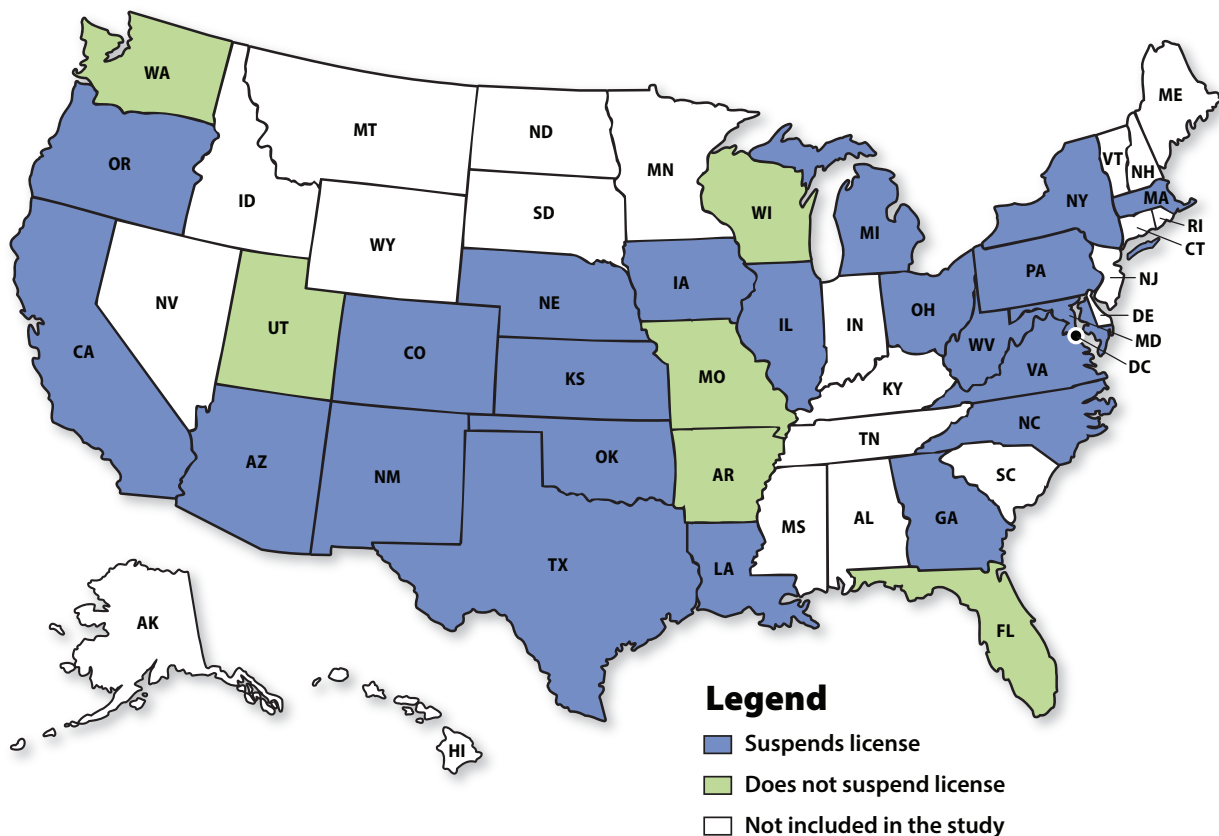
Penalties, determined by state ignition interlock use laws, are for offenders' failure to install an interlock, pass breath test or miss test, or bypass the installed device by driving a different vehicle. For penalties to be effective they should be swift, certain, and appropriately severe.¹ In other words, a penalty that is less attractive to the offender than installing the interlock and is appropriate in that it serves the same purpose as the interlock in keeping the offender from driving impaired.



Penalties are moderately associated with increased interlock use.

States in Action:

Driver's license suspension as a penalty for failing to install an interlock by state



- **Washington:** Applies a four month extension of the original interlock restriction period for offenders who violate program requirements before license reinstatement can occur.
- **Wisconsin:** Applies a six month extension of the original interlock restriction period before license reinstatement can occur.
- **Maryland:** Implements criminal sanctions such as home monitoring or jail if an individual with an interlock requirement on his/her license is caught operating a vehicle that is not equipped with an ignition interlock.

¹ Dula CS, Dwyer WO, LeVerne, G. (2007) Policing the drunk driver: Measuring law enforcement involvement in reducing alcohol-impaired driving. *Journal of Safety Research* 38:267–272.

B. Program Management

Program Key #3: Monitor interlocks to ensure proper use

Monitoring describes ways in which the program follows-up with offenders to make sure they have installed the device correctly, are driving the vehicle with the installed device, and not failing or missing tests or circumventing the interlock.



Monitoring is strongly associated with increased interlock use.

States in Action:

- **Colorado:** Accesses the Online Interlock System (OIS), which uses vendor data to electronically produce an installation certificate and sets the interlock requirement duration and end-date. OIS data are monitored by the Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) driver control unit.
- **Virginia:** Monitors the ignition interlock program through the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP). Courts usually issue Restrictive Driver's License Order forms requiring DWI offenders to attend VASAP education programs and install an interlock. The VASAP case manager then monitors the offender's interlock activities.
- **Washington:** Expanded its data reporting and tracking system in 2010. In order to restore their driving privileges, offenders required to install interlocks must install them, complete the required time period, and complete the final four months without violations, as certified by the interlock vendors.

Program Key #4: Implement uniformly across state

Uniformity refers to consistent operations for program requirements, enforcement, and administration across the state. Consistent documentation of offenses and uniform reporting among state agencies increases overall program efficiency and provides the ability to monitor offenders accurately. Uniform certification procedures for vendors and interlocks, certified installation centers, and uniform reporting procedures also increase efficiency.



Uniformity is moderately associated with increased interlock use.

When programs are strictly judicial, they typically are not uniform because individual judges decide on interlock requirements, monitoring, and violation consequences. When the state's interlock program is administrative (through the DMV, for example) or a hybrid of administrative and judicial, they usually are uniform statewide because there is just one statewide implementation plan that is upheld by the courts for all offenders.

States in Action:

- **Washington:** The state patrol has full authority over monitoring in-the-field compliance with the interlock program. Unified reporting was also implemented in the state.

Program Key #5: Coordinate across agencies

The coordinated efforts of many stakeholders are necessary for effective state ignition interlock programs. Typical stakeholders include law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, probation, licensing, alcohol treatment, and interlock vendors.

States in Action:

- **Several states, including Colorado, Oregon, and Texas** hold regular conferences or meetings between agencies to discuss impaired driving matters, including ignition interlocks.
- **Colorado:** Implemented a Persistent Drunk Driver Committee where representatives from the Division of Behavioral Health, Probation Services, and DMV meet regularly to provide continual program assessment, education, and training on interlocks and interlock programs.



Coordination is moderately associated with increased interlock use.

Program Key #6: Educate stakeholders about the program

Education refers to all of the necessary trainings on ignition interlocks and associated programs and procedures. The audiences for the trainings include all ignition interlock stakeholders, from offenders to state agencies that administer the program.

States in Action:

- **Arizona:** Included ignition interlocks as a topic at their annual judges' conference.
- **Texas:** Used their Center for the Judiciary to educate judges and court staff on using interlocks as a tool to reduce repeat DWI offenders.



Education is moderately associated with increased interlock use.



C. Program Support

Program Key #7: Provide adequate resources

Resources refer to adequate staff and funding. In addition, resources can provide financial assistance for offenders to install interlocks. Therefore, while resources were not directly associated with higher interlock use, they are critical to support the other program keys.

States in Action:

- **Colorado:** Created a financial assistance program for low-income offenders funded by license offenders' reinstatement fees.
- **North Carolina:** Resources alone are weakly associated with increased interlock use, though they are vital to support the other program keys
- **Missouri:** An administrative portion was added to the interlock program that began as a judicial program.
- **Oregon:** Uses the Intoxicated Driver Program Fund to cover costs for offenders who cannot afford interlocks.



Resources alone are weakly associated with increased interlock use, though they are vital to support the other program keys.

Program Key #8: Use data for action

A good record system of accurate, accessible, up-to-date and coordinated data helps determine which offenders are required or eligible to install an interlock, helps monitor offenders and report violators, and can be used to evaluate program effectiveness and suggest improvements. Data were not directly associated with higher interlock use; however, data are needed to support, monitor and improve the implementation of the other program keys.



Data support, monitor, and improve the implementation of the other program keys.

States in Action:

- **Colorado:** Implemented OIS to determine offender eligibility and verify that offenders are installing interlocks at the proper time. OIS electronically uploads certifications of interlock installation, calibration, and removal, along with the interlock data logs that show any violations of the interlock such as an alcohol-positive start attempt.
- **Florida:** Developed a coordinated data system that tracks offenders through the ignition interlock process.
- **Missouri:** Improved its driver license record system by adding new components to capture information regarding interlocks.
- **Virginia:** Improved the VASAP, which administers the interlock program, in order to link the data management system to the DMV system electronically in real time.

For more information:

Evaluation of State Ignition Interlock Programs. Interlock Use Analyses from 28 States, 2006–2011

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/812145-EvalStateIgnitionInterlockProg.pdf>

Case Studies of Ignition Interlock Programs

<http://www.nhtsa.gov/staticfiles/nti/pdf/811594.pdf>

Alcohol Ignition Interlock Programs: Data Management System Implementation

http://tirf.ca/publications/PDF_publications/NHTSA_Tech_Assistance_DataManagement_9.pdf

Community Guide Systematic Review on Ignition Interlocks

<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/mvoi/AID/ignitioninterlocks.html>

Alcohol Interlock Curriculum for Practitioners

<http://www.aic.tirf.ca/section1/index.php>

